

WEDNESDAY

by
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INT. HOUSE-FOYER-MORNING

A small table with a phone, small lamp, answering machine, and fake plant sits motionless against a blandly painted wall whose paint has seen better days.

Beyond it the front door is being pulled to from the outside. Once shut the SOUND of rattling keys locking can be heard. The figure outside passes momentarily by the window to the side of the door.

Though blurred by the decorative glass of the window it is easy to tell it is a WOMAN.

There is a moment of silence.

SOUND: of a car door opening and closing.

SOUND: of the phone as it begins to ring.

After two rings the answering machine clicks on and dutifully begins to take a message.

The voice of an OLDER WOMAN drums out of the machine.

OLDER WOMAN
This is Olivia Panterelli. Neither
Susan nor I can come to the phone.
Leave a message for either one of
us.

There is a halting CLICK followed by a BEEP.

CALLER (OS)
Ooooh Susan...It's Joan. John and I
just returned from Mexico.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRIVEWAY-MORNING-CONTINUOUS

CU on the grill of a car as it emits the whines of a car unwilling to turn over.

CALLER (OS)
We just heard dear...I'm so sorry.
Your mother was such a wonderful
lady. If there is anything we can
do.

As the car struggles, so does SUSAN PANTERELLI who is REVEALED sitting behind the wheel of the car.

A woman in her mid thirties, she is becoming more and more frustrated by the cars refusal to start.

CALLER (OS)

Hopefully you've been able to get some rest. These are the times that we need to stop and take those little moments for ourselves. Call me so I know you're doing OK.
(pause) You really should change the message dear.

As the message finishes, Susan gives up and starts beating the hell out of the wheel with her fists. She begins to flail and scream.

Suddenly she just stops.

Her shoulder length hair has fallen across her face. She doesn't try and adjust it. She simply sits staring straight ahead.

MATCH CUT TO:

Susan sits with the same blank expression on her face. Slowly the SOUNDS of her new surroundings begin to penetrate.

PULL BACK TO
REVEAL

INT. AUTO SHOP-WAITING ROOM-LATER

Wood panel walls run the length of this small room. Plastic chairs, that have seen better days, line the walls. Cheap end tables, heaped with out of date magazines, occasionally interrupt the line of chairs.

Sickly day light streams through the windows bringing the particles in the air to life.

A number of matching faux wood grained vending machines stand at attention, their contents half depleted. Next to them is a wrought iron gum ball machine.

A table with a coffee pot of ominous opaque brew sits next to the gum ball machine. There is a canister of powdered creamer, a pile of sugar packets and a stack of upturned Styrofoam cups. On the other side of the table is a door leading to the garage.

The carpet is stained which doesn't seem to bother the small BOY who sits on it a foot away from an old color television hypnotised by the less than stellar reception of Scooby and the Gang.

The boy's MOTHER sits in a chair near the door. She is anywhere from mid twenties to late forties. Life shows on her face like weather damage on wood.

She appears to have stumbled directly from bead to the repair shop. Her hair is a tangled mess. Her small DAUGHTER struggles against her grip wanting to join her brother on the floor.

Susan just sits there taking it all in. In her lap she clutches a brown paper bag upon which is written "WEDNESDAY" in big black letters.

A YOUNG MECHANIC walks in, ignoring the people, and heads for the coffee pot. IF the grease on his hands and face are any indication of work, then he's been working hard.

He shakes and pours four packets of sugar into a cup and begins to add the dark thick liquid from the pot.

SUSAN (OS)
Excuse me?

The mechanic ignores her and tests his coffee for taste with a small sip. Unsatisfied he adds another packet of sugar.

SUSAN
I was wondering if you could tell
me how much longer it would be on
my car?

The Mechanic is still stirring his coffee.

MECHANIC
Which one is it?

SUSAN
The green Oldsmobile Brougham.

The mechanic moves back toward the door with his coffee shaking his head.

MECHANIC
Not sure. Earl is workin' on that
one.

SUSAN
Could you ask him for me?

The mechanic opens the door to the garage. The room fills with loud sounds of destruction that can only signal a car repair shop.

As the door begins to close behind the young mechanic, the exchange between him and Earl can be hear.

MECHANIC (OS)
Hey Earl?

EARL (OS)
Yeah?

MECHANIC (OS)
How much longer on that Brougham?

EARL (OS)
Hell I don't know, I look like
Nostrodamis?

MECHANIC (OS)
Lady wants to know.

EARL (OS)
Tell her a couple of hours.

MECHANIC (OS)
Hear that lady? Earl says a couple
of hours.

SUSAN
Yea....

Before Susan can answer that she had heard the exchange, the door finally finishes shutting.

Susan sighs, and settles deeper into her chair.

Soon the cacophony of noise begins to fade, becoming comforting white noise.

Susan begins to drift off. Her eyes begin to flutter.

No sooner has she begun to drift off however, then the sound of a loud MAN'S voice penetrates the door of the waiting room.

MAN (OS)

Naw, naw, take your time. Better
your time now than my time later.

The door to the garage opens and a young SALESMAN enters. He's dressed in a black suit with a white shirt and a black tie. He's wearing a black hat and carrying a black suitcase.

He quickly scans the room.

He doffs his hat to the tired woman with the kids.

SALESMAN

Ma'am.

She reacts by blushing lightly and self consciously pulling her open blouse collar together.

As he moves across the room he has to side step the small boy in front of the TV. As he does he reaches out a hand and pats the boy on the head.

SALESMAN

Hey there tiger. Don't sit too
close, you'll hurt your eyes.

The young boy looks up at him, as though lacking a father figure, and does as the Salesman has told him. He scoots back a few feet from the TV on his butt.

As the Salesman approaches Susan she looks shyly away.

The Salesman seat himself near Susan and puts his briefcase next to him on the floor. He then takes off his hat and places it into the seat next to him. He loosens his tie.

This done he looks over at Susan.

Susan becomes rigid as the Salesman seems to stare unabashed at her.

There is an awkward moment of silence.

SALESMAN

Your bag. It says Wednesday. Is it
accurate?

SUSAN

Excuse me?

Susan looks down turning the bag toward her. She blushes with slight embarrassment as she reads the front of it.

SUSAN
Yeah...I make them ahead of time.

SALESMAN
Now that's organization. I like that.

Susan is a bit flustered by the attention the Salesman is giving her.

SALESMAN
What's your name...if you don't mind me asking?

He follows this up with an extended hand.

Susan obliges and the give each other a small quick shake.

SUSAN
Susan.

SALESMAN
That's a pretty name.

SUSAN
Thank You.

Susan turns away timidly.

SALESMAN
Car is on the fritz huh?

Susan smiles meekly and nods.

SALESMAN
Mine too.

He leans back in his chair getting comfortable.

Can't blame it though. I run it day and night. New town every week. New people every day.

They both pause for a moment as the momentum, what little of it there was, comes to a grinding awkward halt.

The Salesman looks around out of habit and spies the coffee pot.

He gestures to it.

SALESMAN

I'm gonna have a cup of coffee, you want one?

Susan eyes that pot as though she would like one, just not from this pot.

SUSAN

Not right now.

SALESMAN

Well, if you'll excuse me for a moment.

The Salesman get up and heads for the pot.

Susan watches him.

The Salesman grabs a cup and begins to fill it with the thick black brew.

SALESMAN

Nothing like a good cup of coffee.

He turns back to Susan while blowing on the coffee to cool it.

Sufficiently cooled he lifts the cups to his lips for that all important first sip.

As he takes the sip his face changes from a look of expectation to a look of betrayal.

He does a classic "spit" take of the coffee, unable to retain it in his mouth.

Some of the coffee sprays the back of the little boy's neck.

SALESMAN

Whoa, sorry about that tiger. You might want to wash that off 'fore it eats through your skin.

The boy looks at him as he rubs the coffee off the back of his neck with his hand.

SALESMAN

Just Kiddin'.

He looks over at the boy's mother who seems oblivious to the fact that he has spit on her child. She is obviously taken by him.

SALESMAN

Pardon my French, but this takes like a cat's ass on a hot summer day.

The woman blushes.

Susan, who has been observing this whole thing, finally loses it. She begins to laugh and so does the salesman.

The Salesman moves back toward Susan.

SALESMAN

Lets get out of here, I need a cup of coffee that wasn't recently used to degrease engine parts.

Susan looks around as though the answer as to whether she should accept this offer or not is somehow writ large on the wall.

SUSAN

I don't know.

SALESMAN

Come on. There's a Diner across the street. It's not like we're skippin' school.

Susan looks confused for a moment the stands up and looks out the window.

Across the street is an old style Art Deco Diner.

SUSAN

I didn't even notice it when I came in.

SALESMAN

One thing I've learned on the road is there's always a Diner near by when you need one.

Susan's gaze drifts to the other women whose little girl is now napping in her lap. The woman looks back to Susan and mouths the words "I WOULD" and then looks disparagingly at her two children.

Susan returns her gaze to the Salesman who is smiling at her.

SUSAN

I guess it would be OK.

SALESMAN

Great.

The Salesman points at the Lunch sack Susan still grips in her hands.

SALESMAN

Why don't you leave that here.

Susan hesitates a moment then looking at the bag she gently lowers it into the seat where she had once sat.

SUSAN

You think it will be OK?

SALESMAN

It's just a bagged lunch, do you really care?

SUSAN

I guess not.

As they leave the bagged lunch sits where Susan had once sat, motionless all the while glaring the word WEDNESDAY.

CUT TO:

INT. DINER-BOOTH-MOMENTS LATER

CU of a cup being filled with coffee.

Susan and the Salesman are seated, a Waitress is just finishing filling the cup. She looks at Susan.

WAITRESS

Want anything else?

SUSAN

Not right now, Thank You.

The Waitress nods and moves away.

The Salesman raises his cup to his nose taking in the aroma.

SUSAN

You really like coffee don't you?

SALESMAN

Oh yeah...it's my thing.

SUSAN

Your what?

SALESMAN

The little thing that gives me pleasure. That one thing that keeps my day on the right track. Everybody has one.

SUSAN

I guess.

The Salesman lowers his coffee. He looks at Susan, worried.

SALESMAN

You don't have one?

Susan just sort of shrugs a "no" and takes a sip of her coffee.

SUSAN

So, what makes you travel so much?

SALESMAN

I'm a salesman.

SUSAN

What do you sell?

SALESMAN

Piece of mind.

SUSAN

Like insurance.

SALESMAN

Of a sort.

SUSAN

You seem to enjoy it.

SALESMAN

Wouldn't do it if I didn't.

SUSAN

Must be nice doing something you enjoy.

SALESMAN

What other way is there?

The Salesman takes a sip of coffee relishing in it.

SALESMAN

So, Susan, what is that you do?

SUSAN

I'm a bank teller.

SALESMAN

Ah...you're a gate keeper. A
Centurion of others hard earned
wages.

SUSAN

I guess.

SALESMAN

You don't like it?

SUSAN

It's OK.

SALESMAN

If it's only OK, then why do you do
it?

SUSAN

I've got obligations,
responsibilities.

SALESMAN

Yes you do...to yourself.

SUSAN

No, to my mother.

Susan stops. She is so used to this excuse she'd forgotten it
was no longer viable.

SUSAN

Well, I mean I used to. She was
sick. She couldn't work.

SALESMAN

And that seemed acceptable to you?

SUSAN

I didn't really have a choice. I'm an only child. My father died when I was young.

SALESMAN

That's too bad.

SUSAN

What having to take care of those that need you?

SALESMAN

No, not having a choice.

The moment spills over into awkward silence.

Susan takes a sip of her coffee then comes around.

SUSAN

So, do you ever want to be anything else? I mean after.

SALESMAN

Not yet. But then again I still seem to be pretty able to do what I do.

SUSAN

What happens when you're not?

The Salesman takes a moment to ponder this and to enjoy another sip of coffee.

SALESMAN

Then I walk into a Diner I've never been to, in a town I've never been in and I sit down and I have a cup of coffee.

SUSAN

That's not what I meant. What will you do?

SALESMAN

I haven't the slightest idea, but that isn't important. What's important is that I begin by doing something for myself.